

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-09 IO-14 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSM-05
TRSE-00 ACDA-10 DHA-02 ORM-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02
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O R 221432Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6839
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
/USMISSION USUN 4848
USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 4547

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PPFE, SREF, IS, TW, US
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER'S REMARKS ON THE ASSUMPTION OF THE DUTIES
OF HIS OFFICE

1.AS THE GOVERNMENT BEGAN ITS TRANSITION FOR THE
CABINET OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER RABIN TO THAT OF PRIME
MINISTER BEGIN, THERE WERE A NUMBER OF CEREMONIES IN
VARIOUS MINISTRIES TO MARK THE OCCASION. IN REMARKS TO
THE STAFF AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE ON JUNE 21,
BEGIN REFERRED TO TWO CURRENT FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBJECTS.
HE NOTED HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO
ADMIT TO ISRAEL THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ABOARD THE
"YUVALI" (SEE TEL AVIV 4492 AND STATE 143994).
HE ALSO DISCUSSED BRIEFLY THE MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS
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FROM THE PRESIDENT AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS WAS
THE "AMERICAN DOCUMENT" TO WHICH HE HAD REFERRED
IN HIS REMARKS TO THE KNESSET THE DAY BEFORE (SEE
TEL AVIV 4493). EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE HAS BEEN
GIVEN TO THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE AND SEVERAL PAPERS
HAVE NOTED THAT THE LETTER WAS "WARMER THAN USUAL."

2. THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF BEGIN'S REMARKS AS
PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRESS OFFICE: BEGIN TEXT

3. PRIME MINISTER RABIN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I
WISH TO THANK KNESSET MEMBER YITZHAK RABIN FOR THE
SMOOTH TRANSITION OF POWER WHICH GIVES EXPRESSION
TO THE DEMOCRATIC CONCEPTS OF OUR NATION. MR. RABIN
HAS PERSONALLY DONE MUCH TO ENSURE THIS SMOOTH TRANSITION.

4. YESTERDAY IN THE KNESSET I SAID WHAT MY FIRST ACTION
WOULD BE AS PRIME MINISTER, AND INDEED, I AM ABOUT TO
CONTACT THE DIRECTOR OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, THROUGH
THE FOREIGN MINISTER, AND INSTRUCT HIM WITHOUT DELAY
TO PREPARE A SAFE HAVEN FOR THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES
WHO WERE SAVED FROM DROWNING BY AN ISRAELI SHIP. WE
HAVE LEARNED FROM THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH BOATS WHICH
WANDERED THE SEVEN SEAS LOOKING FOR A HAVEN, AND WHICH
WERE TURNED AWAY.

5. WE WILL NEVER FORGET THE SHIP WHICH LEFT GERMANY
BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR FULL OF
PASSENGERS WITH CUBAN VISAS--VISAS WHICH SUBSEQUENTLY
WERE NOT HONORED, NOR DID ANY OTHER COUNTRY ACCEPT
THEM. AND AFTER THE SHIP WAS BROUGHT BACK TO
GERMANY MANY OF THEM WENT TO THE GAS CHAMBERS.

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6. WE AS A JEWISH STATE WILL NOT TOLERATE SUCH WRONGS
TO HUMANITY AS WERE COMMITTED IN THE PAST AND WE ARE
THEREFORE GRANTING ASYLUM TO THESE REFUGEES, WHO
HAVE CHOSEN FREEDOM.

7. YESTERDAY IN THE KNESSET I ALSO MENTIONED A CERTAIN
AMERICAN DOCUMENT, THIS IS THE PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH WAS HANDED TO
ME BY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN THIS COUNTRY. MR.
LEWIS. IN THE COURSE OF THE DAY WE WILL RELEASE ITS
CONTENTS TO THE MEDIA.

8. AFTER READING THESE WORDS OF HIS, WHICH ARE HEART-
FELT AND WARM, I WISH TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO
THANK PRESIDENT CARTER FOR THIS PERSONAL MESSAGE TO
ME. HE HAS INVITED ME TO COME TO WASHINGTON, TO THE
WHITE HOUSE, ON JULY 18, AND OF COURSE, WE WILL ACCEPT.

9. ONLY A FEW WEEKS REMAIN TO PREPARE FOR THIS
VISIT. IT IS A SHORT TIME AND WE WILL ALL HAVE TO
DO THE NECESSARY WORK SO THAT FROM THE ISRAELI STAND-
POINT THE VISIT WILL BE PROPERLY PREPARED.

10. AND NOW, MR. PRIME MINISTER, BEFORE YOU TAKE
LEAVE OF US, I WISH TO SAY TO THE ENTIRE NATION THAT
MR. YITZHAK RABIN HAS PLAYED A HISTORIC ROLE IN
THE HISTORY OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL AS A FIGHTER
FROM A VERY EARLY AGE IN THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE,
IN THE RANKS OF THE PALMACH, AS A SENIOR COMMANDER
IN OUR ARMY, AND AS THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE SIX
DAY WAR. THE NATION IS GRATEFUL.

11. THE NATION HAS MADE ITS DECISION, IT HAS ELECTED
A NEW GOVERNMENT. BUT I AM CERTAIN THAT NO ISRAELI
CITIZEN WILL FORGET MR. RABIN'S ROLE IN THE ANNALS
OF OUR PEOPLE.
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12. I WISH MR. RABIN ALL THE BEST--TO HIM, TO
HIS WIFE AND FAMILY, IN PRIVATE LIFE AND AS A MEMBER OF
THE KNESSET. END TEXT
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